

Benbrooks retires after 30 years of service

BY STAFF SGT. LAURA HOLZER
58th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs

The chief said he knew this day would have to come sooner or later. Chief Robert Benbrooks, 58th Special Operations Wing command chief master sergeant, will retire May 2 after 30 years of service.

Benbrooks has spent two years in the top enlisted position in the wing. As the command chief, he advises the commander on critical issues affecting morale, welfare and readiness of the enlisted force.

“We have the best folks in the Air Force,” said the chief. “They are a hardworking team and continue to accomplish the special operations and rescue mission. They are truly dedicated warriors and I couldn’t ask for better.”

In 1983, Benbrooks flew the initial assault of elite special operations forces into Port Salinas, Grenada, during Operation URGENT FURY. He has 6,150 flight hours and 28 combat and combat support hours.

The chief is also an advocate of TEAM KIRTLAND. He’s participated in TEAM KIRTLAND’s quarterly and annual award banquets and has helped other agencies with change of command ceremonies and the Air Force Cross ceremony.

“We have a great team here on Kirtland,” said Chief Benbrooks. “A great team is

like an oiled machine, and you have to continue to make sure it keeps running. It doesn’t matter what command patch you’re wearing, we all have to work together.”

The chief will work as a defense contractor for special operations acquisitions issues in Warner Robins, Ga. However, he said, he would enlist for another 30 years if the Air

Force would let him.

“Thirty years is not enough,” he said. “But I’m glad to spend the last years here at the 58th SOW. I know that the people here will con-

tinue to work hard. I’m proud of their accomplishments. We train the most elite special operations and rescue aircrews in the world and we’re very proud of that.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Laura Holzer

Chief Master Sgt. Robert Benbrooks, 58th Special Operations Wing command chief master sergeant, talks to Master Sgt. Ronald Williams. After 30 years of service to the Air Force and nation, the chief will retire May 2.

377th Air Base Wing Inspector General retires

Col. Richard M. Savage of the 377th Air Base Wing Inspector General office retires today in a ceremony at 10 a.m. in the base chapel. Col. William Cleckner, who takes leadership of the IG office, comes from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., where he has served as the 45th Maintenance Group deputy commander.

Savage plans to live in the local area after retirement, pursuing a degree in construction and later will move to the Black Hills in South Dakota where he will build a home.





Photo by Todd Berenger

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Col. Michael Byers, 58th Special Operations Wing commander, is sprayed with string after his final flight Tuesday. Col. Byers retires today after a change of command ceremony, 9 a.m., in Hangar 1000.

American Red Cross warns military families of hoax

The American Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Services learned from the National Guard Bureau about a disturbing hoax perpetrated on families of deployed military.

As part of the hoax, families are called by someone claiming to be “a representative from the Red Cross,” who tells the families their deployed member is missing in action.

So far, incidents have occurred in Alabama and Michigan.

When such events actually occur, the U.S.

military, not the American Red Cross, is the organization that notifies families regarding the status of their military loved ones. The notification is almost always done by military casualty officials.

The American Red Cross wants families or individuals who receive the hoax calls to immediately contact their local military liaison and to call a special Red Cross toll-free number, 888-309-9679. The Red Cross will relay this information to appropriate authorities.

Reservists: check child support rules before deploying

Guard and Reserve members who have child support obligations and whose civilian income is larger than their military incomes should review their rights before they get orders.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service’s Garnishment Operations Directorate has been working with the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement to address child support payment issues related to activated Reservists.

One scenario of concern, said Rod Winn, garnishment operations director, is a Reservist whose child support order is based on civilian income and doesn’t take into account a possible loss of income caused by military activation. Neither the obligation nor the payment due is affected automatically by military service ex-

cept as the support order may state.

Reservists who need relief must ask for a review and modification of the child support obligation from their appropriate state child support agency, he said. For more information, he said, visit the Web sites below:

State child support enforcement agencies gateways are:

www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/extinf.htm#exta.

Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement Information Memorandum (IM)-01-09:

www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pol/im-01-09.htm.

DOD guidance, provided under “Family Law Matters” at the secure Web site operated by the Army Judge Advocate General’s Office:

<https://www.jagcnet.army.mil/Legal>.